

A S M A L E

handfull of fragrant

Flowers, selected and gathered  
out of the lovely garden of sacred scrip-  
tures, fit for any Honorable or  
worshipfull Gentlewo-  
man to smell vnto.

Dedicated for a Newe-  
yeeses gyft, to the honorable  
and vertuous Lady, the Lady  
Sheffeld.

By N. B.

*John Smith.*

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**T**o the right Honorable and vertuous Lady,  
the Lady Sheffeld, N. B. wisheth conti-  
nual health, with increase  
of honours.



**A**nd I must of necessitie (right hono-  
rable and vertuous Lady) give leave, licence  
and libertie vnto such as altogether search  
out the strange operations of thinges wil-  
ling incredible to the rude and ignorant sort:  
So reposing a confidence in your noble degree,  
redy prest to accept the simple gift of a yong and vnskilful hus-  
bandman, I am the more bold: to present your Ladyship with  
this litle handful of Flowers, the sent wherof I trust, being  
gathered in so fruitful a time, wil so reuiue your senses, that your  
godly industrie wil vouchsafe to plant the roote therof in the  
Gardē of nobilitie, which I am assured, being watered with  
the due vnderstanding of the founten of knowledge, cannot chuse  
but encrease to a defenseable mount. And your godly & modest de-  
meanor. As therefore on the other side, your vertuous life is such as  
rather alloweth the godly workes of a simple scholler, willing by  
dayly practise to grow vnto more & exacter ripenes of vndersta-  
ding. And on the other part is redy to prefer the base & coltreys  
mans pen, to the end that I in this hereafter take the more hart  
of grace, to attempt a more substantial peece of worke. And then  
if it shal please the almighty to be my guide, in future time I wil  
not be forgetfull of your Honors clemencie, which the almighty  
God garde and furnish plentifully with increase & maynenance  
of renowne for euer.

Your most humble to com-  
maunde N. B.



**¶ John Parcels pamphlet in the  
praise of this handful of flowres.**

**T**he little Be, saye Ladies al,  
Winges more encrease then both the Right;  
Wherfore although this booke be small,  
The flowres thereof may wel delight,  
A seconde pearles Saba quene,  
Because they are continuall greene.

**¶** Peruse them well therefore and say,  
We haue the choyse of good and yll,  
Yet if my counsel by the way,  
Might brge your minde or moue your wyl,  
To imitat this peece of worke,  
For many a pearle therein dothe lurke.

**¶** For though the fountayne be not here,  
Of heauenly health that both excell,  
Yet to your sight may playne appere,  
The golden Bucket of the Well,  
Wherfore deare dames keepe that in store,  
And tyme wyl yelde to you the more.

**¶** It is no Poetes fable olde,  
It is no gaudie nor trifle bayne,  
It is a gifte excellling golde:  
In which the Gentle State may trayne,

Them selues to godly exercise,  
And learne thereby fo: to be wyse.

¶ Seache therfore suche a Honycombe,  
And trye the same with diligence,  
It is no fruitles vanishing some,  
It is a cerce of excellence:  
The ioyce wherreef beyng pleasant swete,  
Is fo: a curteous Patrone mete.

¶ Thus virgins, wyues, and widowes too,  
If that you tender your estate,  
Learne as he teacheth you to do,  
That framde this Posie fo: your sake:  
And than you can not lose the crowne,  
Diana holdeth with renewne.

F. P.





## The booke to the Reader.

**S**ince I p<sup>er</sup>ce booke am put into thy hand,  
although the tome or volume litle be,  
Yet Reader deare that I be thoroughly scand  
with ielous minde I begge and craue of thee  
Be seeme to iudge or sentence thine to frame,  
Besore throughout thou do peruse the same.

Reade not as though thou wouldest forget agayne,  
such fruitles sayth bringes profite none at all:  
But if thou wylt reape merite for thy payne,  
let not regarde from wonted custome fall,  
Which as I reade by wise men is definid,  
While time doth serue, to beare the fruits in mind.

If then I cast a iewell vnto thee,  
play not the Cocke that Elope speaketh on,  
Who rather craved a barlye corne to see:  
then for to finde the costly p<sup>re</sup>cious stone,  
But if I might giue counsel with the rest,  
First reade, th<sup>at</sup> chuse such fruits as lyke thee best.

Holde me excused, and take my maisters *Muse*,  
in as good part as payne he doth bestowe,  
Let his good wyll his simple worke excuse,  
for were it much more better: to bestowe  
For thy delyght he woulde vouchsafe his toyle,  
And yelde to thee the croppe of suche a soyle.

F I N I S.

# The Author to his Lady

in verse.

**I**n auncient tyme the golden guise  
of Matrons great renownen,  
Was for to striue in vertues schole,  
who should enioye the crowne:  
So that eche bzaunche of noblenes,  
surpassed in those dayes.  
Because they sought by their attempt  
to winne immortall praise:  
As for example, Lucrece chaste,  
and famous sacred lyfe  
May record be, who as I reade,  
was Collatinus wyfe.

And next to her, that pearle of price,  
which Triata had to name.  
By constant loue to Mansolus  
doth manifest the same.  
Thiroly, quene Artimesia reapt  
the Scepter by desert,  
That could as well as all the rest,  
most finely play her part.  
But synce that Sabbas wisdom great,  
in honour yours doth raigne.  
I must deare Ladie wish to you

## *for women to smel to.*

aswel, as to the frayne.  
For why? the garland that you weare  
is euer fresh and greene,  
And serues most fit in Court therewith,  
to tende vpon a Quene.

The modestie of Patrons myde,  
bedeck with vertue rounde.  
There is no twight but well may see  
in you so, to abounde.  
So that a patern to the mimphes  
of Court and courtly crewe,  
Your Ladship resembleth well,  
as plainely they may be we.  
For on the one side garded with  
Dame vertue you doe enter:  
And on the other, continence  
encourageth you to venter.

Wherefore, since then defended with  
such ayde to your degree.  
Your noble race procureth these  
your daies with ioyes to see,  
That Flora, Susan, and the rest  
attaind vnto the ende.  
Your Honour might conceiue my cause,  
a slowe and thankles friend,  
If that this time he should negle



# *A handful of flowres*

to beautifie your name:

Whose merites are blowne all abrode,  
in golden trumpe of fame.

Wherefore as pledge of my good will,  
with humble dutie due,

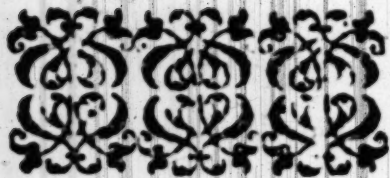
Accept I traue this litle booke  
that I present to you.

And though it be of value small,  
or simple to your sight,

Your wysedome may conceiue the Larks,  
more daintier then the Byght.

G. T.

*The*



**The names of all the flowres**  
conteyned in this posic, with the  
proper vse therof.

**D**ear Dames, your senses to reuine,  
accept these flowers in order beare,  
Then for the time you are aliuie  
renowne your golden dayes shall beare:  
Marke therfore what they haue to name,  
and learne to imitate the same.

**The first resembleth Constance,**  
a worthie budde of passing fame,  
**Which euery Gentle certeinlie**  
delightes to chuse of for the name:  
**The cause is (that) the trueth to tell,**  
it sents and saours passing well.

**This flower in her garden graine**  
Susanna planted daye and howre,  
**Which by her lyfe was dayly seene,**  
when her good fame for to deuoure  
**The wicked Elders did pretend,**  
to bring her dayes vnto an end.

**But God that saue her constancies,**  
and howe she was kniustlie wrongde,

A. v.

Cause

## *A handful of flowres*

Gave little Daniel warrantice,  
to be her Judge, wherwith he throngs  
Amidest the pzease with helpe divine,  
and rescued Susan at that tyme.

Then when her stedfastnes was knowne,  
and howe she sented of that flower,  
Whiche in Dianas holwer was sowen,  
the carnall Judges fleshy power  
Was cut full short, and the like case  
was honored in the iudgement place.

O woorthy sprig of constancie,  
Diewell farre surpassing gold,  
Preserued by the eternitie,  
as a looking glasse for to behold,  
To suche as couet with renoune,  
to weare that chaste and pearles crowne.

This pleasaunt b:auche in Sar aces best,  
was dayly vsed for a shewe,  
So that her sayth among the rest,  
thereby did bountifullly growe.  
And she extolled was therefore,  
as noble Patrone euermore.

Well myght I call to memorie,  
Rebecca mild and Iudith chaste,



## *for women to smel to.*

By whose great sayth and constancie,  
Holoernes power was soze agasse,  
So that as playne the scriptures say,  
his hostes were fayne to flye away.

Since then ye Ladies of degré,  
and honoꝝs nimphes within the place,  
Whercas that pearles dame may bee,  
which al the Goddes inspire with grace,  
This flowze I say doth sent so well,  
accept the sweete and sauery smell.

There is no odious stinck at all,  
of any woꝝldly infamie,  
That can procure your ruynous fall,  
yf you reteyne this constancie,  
And therfoze Ladies plucke this flowze,  
soꝝ why it withereth neuer an houre.

The second budde is modestie,  
which Triata did muche delyght.  
And furnished the companie,  
of many a Romane matrone bryght,  
So that no blemishe there did growe,  
as long as they the same coude showe.

The thirde is vertuous exercise,  
the fourth is called humilitie,

## *A handful of flowres*

The fifth, to set besoyour eyes,  
the feare of God most reuerently.

The sixth obedience to the crowne,  
and Princes lawes with great renowne.

The seuenth is Pacience, soz to beare  
the crosse of Chyriste continually:

The eyght is liberall talke to heare,  
and vse the same indifferently:

The ninth is called Chastitie:  
the tenth, to put vp iniurie.

The eleuenth is to sustayne the poze:  
the twelfth to aide the comfortles,

And to endeavour more and more,  
to trayne your steppes to godlynes.

The thirteenth, that is chafest skill,  
which we do call, do good for ill.

The fourteenth is to lone the trouth,  
and flatterie wholly soz to shunne:

The fiftenth, barre the chaire of slouth,  
whereby full many are vndonne:

For idelnes doth shame but wyne,  
and is the entraince vnto synne.

The sixtenth flower is willing zeale  
vnto the sacred veritie:

which

Which is a lantarne to your fete,  
to leade you to sinceritie :  
The feuententh blossom fresh of hue,  
in woꝝdes and dedes foꝝ to be true.

The eyghtenth is foꝝ to reſtoꝝe  
that by oppꝛeſſion hath ben gotte:  
The niententh foꝝ to cure that ſoꝝe,  
which careleſſe conſcience makes to rotte :  
The twentieth is ſweete Charitie ,  
the fruites wherof begin to dye.

There are beſides theſe, godly loue,  
whole leaues though they be not ſo greene ,  
Yet who to plucke therof wyl pꝛoue,  
ſhall with Lucrecia ſone bz. ſeene,  
To ſhine in woꝝdes and dedes as bright,  
as when the moone doth yeelde her lyght.

Loe Gentles, this ſmal bunche of flowꝝes,  
It is that may encrease your fame,  
foꝝ they be watered with the ſhowꝝes,  
that ſacred Scriptures haue to name:  
You may diſcerne them by the ſeedes,  
full much vnylike to woꝝdly weedes.

Take heede therfoꝝe howe you reiect,  
the ſimpleſt flowꝝe among them all,



## *A handful of flowres*

For if disdayne do you infect,  
to plucke one leafe the rest wyl fall:  
Do not therfore the threde vntwinde,  
Which doth this prettie posie bynde.

The name thereof is diligence,  
in seeking vertuous company:  
A string of great preheminence,  
giuen vnto vs in generally.  
Therewith eche godly wyght doth make,  
A snare therewith eche vice to take.

Good Matrones therfore I require,  
as one that wisheth al were well:  
To beare a zeale and full desire,  
to bye these Flowres that so dyd smell.  
Shall the bountie of the Lorde,  
with all your workes right well accorde.

o whom be honoꝝ, power, and fame,  
praise, laude, and sempiternitie:  
oth God and man sweete Chryste the same,  
who planted for a certayntie.  
these Flowres in heauenly paradise,  
for such to gather as will be wise.


is blessing say, and let vs craue,  
to lyght vpon our soueraigne Queene:

Who

## *for women to smell to.*

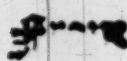
**Whom we may see in hande to haue  
this litle branche of flowres greene.  
Which sends and saours passing well,  
the reddest way to heauen to smell.**

**Her counsell and nobilitie.  
the Pastors of the Church lyke case:  
The nightie God continually,  
byd we with golden drops of grace.  
That they may serue her maiestie:  
With reuerence and humilitie.**

 **A prayer for gentlewomen  
and others to vse, whereby through  
the helpe of the deuine grace, they may  
attayne the right sente of this posie of  
Gods flowres.**

**V**ouchsafe, O Lorde, to be our guyde,  
thy spirite of grace into vs powre:  
Defende our cause on euery side,  
that we may passe into the bowre:  
Whereas those heauenly flowres do growe:  
By Christ that Garden first dyd sowe.

**Illuminate our inwarde minde,  
to seeke to thee continually:**



From worldly Errours that be blind,  
preserue vs for thy Paestie.

Teache vs as we in wordes professe,  
In dedes each one to do no lesse.

Assist vs dayly to begin,

Spiritually to enterfight

Agaynst the worlde, the flesh, and sinne,  
that we may shunne the duskie nyght.

In whiche our enimie the deuill,

Doth watche to worke each Christian euill.

Arme vs with sayth to beare the shield,  
and swoorde of heauenly puritie :

Crowne vs with Helmet in the filde,  
of thy surpassing veritie.

Grant this O bounteous Iesu sweete,  
That we with thee at last may meete.

F I N I S.





